DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 236 660 CS 207 935

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TITLE	Gary-Brown Writing Opinionnaire for College Instructors.
PUB DATE	81
NOTE	11p.; For related documents, see CS 207 904-945. Document may not reproduce well.
PUB TYPE	Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Attitude Measures; College Faculty; Inservice Teacher Education; *Teacher Attitudes; *Writing Instruction; Writing Research
IDENTIFIERS	*The Research Instruments Project

ABSTRACT

Designed to assess teachers' attitudes toward teaching writing, evaluating writing, and teaching course content through writing, the first part of this two-part measure is a Likert-type scale containing 35 items representing the instrument's three purposes. The second part asks for professional opinions in 12 categories, including extent of marginal comment on student papers, nature of writing assignments, peer evaluation, percentage of college students with severe writing problems, most common student writing errors, rewriting, and recommendations for improvement of instruction. (This document is one of those reviewed in The Research Instrument Project (TRIP) monograph "Measures for Research and Evaluation in the English Language Arts, Volume 2," published by the Committee on Research of the National Council of Teachers of English in cooperation with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills. The TRIP review, included here as an introduction to the instrument, describes the instrument's category (writing), title, author, date, age range (adult), purpose, and physical characteristics.) (HTH)

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Gary-Brown Writing Opinionnaire for College Instructors.

The measurement instruments contained in this document have been reviewed in a monograph (cited below) edited by William T. Fagan, Charles Cooper, and Julie Jensen, for The Research Instruments Project (TRIP), and funded by a grant from the Trustees of the NCTE Research Foundation:

Measures for Research and Evaluation
in the
English Language Arts
Volume II

The purpose of the editors has been to select and review measurement instruments pertaining to all aspects of research and evaluation in the English language arts, e.g. language and language development, literacy, literature, reading (including comprehension, teacher-pupil interaction, etc.), writing, and teacher knowledge and attitudes. In order to make some of the actual instruments reviewed more readily available, the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills (ERIC/RCS) has cooperated with the editors by processing selected instruments into the ERIC system (see the 42 documents assigned Clearinghouse accession numbers CS 207 904-945).

CS 207935

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Category: Teacher Knowledge and Attitudes

Title: Gary-Brown Writing Opinionnaire for College Instructors

Authors: Melvin Gary
Sandra Brown

Age Range: Adult

Description of Instrument:

Purpose: To assess teachers' attitudes toward teaching writing, evaluating writing, and teaching course content through writing.

Date of Construction: 1981

Physical Description: Part I of this two-part measure is a Likert-type scale containing thirty-five items representing the instrument's three purposes. Responses range across five points from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Sample items:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Evaluating Writing					
3. Specific penalties in grades should be assigned for mechanical errors in term papers--for example, points should be deducted for each grammatical error.					
Knowledge of the Writing Process					
16. Students should engage in a pre-writing process prior to writing the first draft of their compositions.					
Teaching Course Content through Writing					
27. Writing is a primary mode of learning as well as a tool for measuring learning.					

Part II asks for professional opinions in twelve categories, including extent of marginal comment on student papers, nature of writing assignments, peer evaluation, percentage of college students with severe writing problems, most common student writing errors, rewriting, and recommendations for improvement of instruction. Approximately thirty minutes are needed for administration of the total instrument.

Validity, Reliability, and Normative Data:

The scale is in use by 227 faculty members at Livingston College, Rutgers University. No reliability or normative data have thus far been reported. The present scale was constructed after suggested revisions were made by college administrators, professors of English, and professors of English Education. The suggestions of these experts contributed to the content validity of the scale.

Related Documents:

Commission on Composition, National Council of Teachers of English. "Composition Opinionnaire: The Student's Right to Write." Urbana, IL: ERIC/RCS, 1972. (ED 091 729)

WRITING OPINIONNAIRE

PART 1

Directions

Check the column that most nearly represents your response to each of the statements that follow.

Strongly Agree means complete, definite agreement.

Agree means general agreement.

No Opinion means no opinion either way and your response might be described as neutral.

Disagree means general disagreement.

Strongly Disagree means complete, definite disagreement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
*1. Research paper assignments should be more extensive than the mere specification of a topic or list of topics.					
*2. The major purpose of assigning a term paper is to help students learn the conventions of standard English.					
3. Specific penalties in grades should be assigned for mechanical errors in term papers--for example, points should be deducted for each grammatical error.					
4. Knowledge of grammar will produce improvement in student writing.					
*5. Successful student writing can be achieved if a paper is carefully corrected by the instructor.					

*Items indicated by an asterisk are based on items appearing on Part II of the "Composition Opinionnaire: The Student's Right to Write," Members of the Commission on Composition, NCTE, ERIC, 1972.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6. Writing assignments in my course serve as an aid in the learning process.					
*7. College freshmen who are able to consistently write standard English should not be required to do further writing assignments in order to improve their skills.					
8. Students should be discouraged from using their own dialect in the writing of term papers.					
*9. In order to improve his/her writing, a poor writer should be encouraged to write only short, simple sentences.					
*10. Students should be encouraged to prepare a written outline before they begin writing a paper.					
11. Writing improves students' reasoning processes by teaching them devices for strengthening the continuity of thought.					
12. Every good paragraph should demonstrate a clear transition from the preceding paragraph.					
13. In my discipline, a single letter grade is sufficient to inform a student of the quality of his/her paper.					
14. Growth in writing continues throughout the four years of college, validating the statement "there is always room for improvement."					
*15. Students who speak fluently and effectively are generally good writers.					
16. Students should engage in a pre-writing process prior to writing the first draft of their compositions.					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
*17. Evaluation should be individualized; standards set for one student may be inappropriate for other students in the same class.					
*18. Instructors should correct writing errors on term papers.					
19. Students should be required to rewrite a paper that has a significant number of writing problems.					
20. There is a high correlation between one's intellectual ability and one's writing ability.					
21. Students should have freedom in selecting the topics for their term papers.					
*22. The instructor should correct students' oral language so that the correct grammatical forms will appear in their writing.					
23. The major purpose of evaluating a term paper is to improve an individual's cognitive skills.					
24. In my discipline, a student should be required to write at least one paper in each course beyond the introductory level.					
*25. If students are given frequent opportunities to write, they will discover various acceptable forms of writing on their own.					
26. Evaluation of written work constitutes a major portion of the total evaluative process in my course.					
27. Writing is a primary mode of learning as well as a tool for measuring learning.					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
28. In my department, most instructors are familiar with the support services available to students with writing problems.					
29. Teacher or student intervention in the writing process (such as help with early drafts) should play a part in writing assignments.					
30. Specific objectives/guidelines pertaining to writing assignments should be provided to students.					
31. Writing instruction should be the exclusive responsibility of a "writing teacher."					
32. Students should be allowed to use their own dialect in writing assignments.					
33. The use of objective tests is the most effective means of evaluating learning in my discipline.					
34. A need exists for a continued form of instruction in writing beyond the freshman year.					
35. Faculty training workshops in writing to ensure the informed use of writing in discipline courses would be useful.					

WRITING OPINIONNAIRE

PART II

Directions

Respond as indicated by each question.

1. Academic Title: _____

2. How extensively do you comment in the margins when reacting to a student's paper?

   ____ At the beginning only

   ____ Throughout the paper

   ____ Summary at end of paper

   ____ Other (specify) _____

3. What kinds of writing are required in your classes?

____ Term paper	____ Journal	____ Letter writing
____ Lab report	____ Case study	____ Book report
____ Essay	____ Story (fictive writing)	____ Other (specify)
____ Poetry	____ Notebook	_____

4. Do you think requiring an outline or first draft will reduce the risk of plagiarism?

   ____ Yes ____ No

5. Do you feel that peer evaluation of writing tasks (i.e., critiquing in small groups) may be helpful in rectifying students' writing problems?

   ____ Yes ____ No

6. What percentage of college students have a severe writing problem?

____ 0	____ 40%	____ 80%
____ 10%	____ 50%	____ 90%
____ 20%	____ 60%	____ 100%
____ 30%	____ 70%	

7. First, check (✓) what you consider to be common student writing errors. Then double check (✓✓) the five most common errors.

____ Inconsistent point of view

____ Lack of a point of view (no recognizable focus)

____ Lack of the ability to analyze or synthesize

____ Poor thematic or overall organization

____ Poor paragraph organization

____ Poor paragraph transition (no apparent sequence)

____ Unclear argument (lack of a controlling statement of purpose or thesis)

____ Errors in inductive or deductive reasoning

____ Lack of supporting evidence

____ Lack of details (clarification of theme)

____ Errors in sentence structure (run-ons, fragments; elements not parallel; short, childlike, or repetitious syntax)

____ Errors in word choice

____ Lack of subject-verb agreement

____ Verb tense errors

____ Poor word order (standard forms ignored)

____ Improper use of plurals

____ Punctuation errors

____ Spelling errors

____ General sloppiness (disregard for legibility, typographical errors, spacing)

Other errors:_____

8. Under what conditions would you require a student to rewrite his/her paper?

9. Do you think that writing assignments should be a part of all courses?

____ Yes ____ No. Explain.

10. What recommendations do you have for the improvement of measuring/judging/evaluating writing at your college?

11. What recommendations do you have for the improvement of teaching writing at your college?

12. Would you be interested in attending a workshop on the use of writing assignments in courses other than freshman composition courses?

____ Yes ____ No